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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes the conclusions and outcomes of a meeting on Post-Secondary Colleges in the Small States of the Commonwealth, organized by the Commonwealth Secretariat. The report describes the current trend towards the establishment and development of postsecondary colleges in the small states of the Commonwealth, explores the reasons for the creation of these institutions, and discusses the processes and procedures which have been followed in their establishment. The organization, management, and financing of multi-purpose colleges are also examined as well as the ways and means by which the range and level of courses and programs are determined. The potential for delivering courses in new and more diverse ways is also discussed followed by the implications of institutional change for the professional development of college staff. The critical importance of developing college linkages nationally, regionally, and internationally is stressed, followed by consideration of aid and cooperation among colleges, ministries, and regional and international institutions. General recommendations and major conclusions are highlighted, and a set of specific follow-up proposals are listed. Appendices include lists of participants and reference documents. (GLR)

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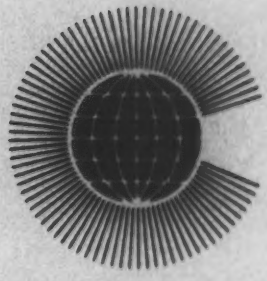
A Pan-Commonwealth Meeting on

Post-Secondary Colleges in the Small States of the Commonwealth

Sir Arthur Lewis Community College

Castries, St Lucia, 16-23 June 1988

SUMMARY REPORT



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SUMMARY REPORT

Education Programme
Human Resource Development Group
Commonwealth Secretariat
Marlborough House, Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HX

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The Education Programme of the Human Resource Development Group of the Commonwealth Secretariat wishes to acknowledge the exceptional support - professional and administrative - afforded to the meeting on Post-Secondary Colleges in the Small States of the Commonwealth, by the Ministry of Education and Culture, St Lucia and by the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, and in particular, its principal, Mr Leton Thomas.

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page(s)
Introduction	1-3	1
The Post-Secondary College in the Small States of the Commonwealth	4-10	2
Reasons for the Establishment of Multi-Purpose, Post-Secondary Colleges	11-35	4
Processes and Procedures for the Establishment of the Post-Secondary College	36-62	9
Range and Level of Courses	63-76	16
Modes of Delivery	77-89	19
Staff Development	90-98	22
Linkages	99-114	25
Aid and Co-operation	115-123	28
Proposals for Future Co-operation		32
Annex A: List of Participants		33-40
Annex B: List of Documents		41-42

POST-SECONDARY COLLEGES IN THE SMALL STATES OF THE COMMONWEALTH

PAN-COMMONWEALTH MEETING

SIR ARTHUR LEWIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

CASTRIES, ST LUCIA, 16-23 JUNE 1988

CONCLUSIONS AND OUTCOMES

INTRODUCTION

1 This short report summarises the conclusions and outcomes of a meeting on Post-Secondary Colleges in the Small States of the Commonwealth, organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in association with the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, and at the invitation of the Ministry of Education and Culture, St Lucia. Financial support for the meeting came from the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC).

2 The meeting was attended by college principals, senior college staff and senior officials from Ministries of Education in 12 Commonwealth countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, The Gambia, Jamaica, Kiribati, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Solomon Islands and Tonga). Bermuda College, Holland College from Prince Edward Island, Canada, and the States of Jersey Education Department, were also represented. In addition there were participants from the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), the British Development Division in the Caribbean, the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), the Caribbean Network of Educational Innovation for Development (CARNEID), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), UNESCO, and the University of the West Indies (Cave Hill Campus, Barbados) Annex A provides a list of participants; Annex B the documentatioon for the meeting.

3 The report describes briefly the current trend towards the establishment and development of post-secondary colleges in the small states of the Commonwealth (paragraphs 4-10). It explores the reasons for the creation of these institutions (paragraphs 11-35) and the processes and procedures which have been followed in their establishment (paragraphs 36-44). The organisation, management and financing of multi-purpose colleges are all examined (paragraphs 45-62) as well as the ways and means by which the range and level of courses and programmes are determined (paragraphs 63-76). The potential for delivering courses in new and more diverse ways is discussed (paragraphs 77-89) followed by the implications of institutional change for the professional development of college staff (paragraphs 90-98). The critical importance of developing college linkages nationally, regionally and internationally is the focus for the next section (paragraphs 99-114) followed by consideration of aid and co-operation among and between colleges, ministries, and regional and international institutions (paragraphs 115-123). General recommendations and major conclusions are highlighted in the body of the text. A set of specific follow-up proposals are listed on page 32

THE POST-SECONDARY COLLEGE IN THE SMALL STATES OF THE COMMONWEALTH

4 There are 48 fully independent countries in the Commonwealth. Twenty-eight of these have a population of less than one and a half million; 14 have a population below 200,000. Four of the group are coastal states which are part of a larger land mass and three are landlocked. Six are single islands and a further six are composed of a major island with one or two outlying islands. The remaining nine countries are archipelagos comprising many small islands.

5 In the formal education systems of this set of countries it is possible to recognise six main groups of institutions at

the post-school level. These are national universities, found in eight of the small states (Botswana, Brunei Darrusalam, Guyana, Lesotho, Malta, Mauritius, Swaziland and Western Samoa); regional universities (17 countries are members of either the University of the South Pacific or the University of the West Indies, although the main campuses of these universities are situated in only five countries - Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Fiji and Western Samoa); the national extension centres of the regional universities; national multi-purpose colleges; technical institutes and colleges; and specialised training institutions for professions and services such as the hotel trade, agricultural extension and nursing.

6 The meeting in St Lucia focused on one member of this group - the multi-purpose, post-secondary college, which may bring under its roof a range of offerings including 'A' level or higher certificate courses, first year or associate degree programmes, technical and vocational courses, training for specialised professional groups such as teachers, nurses and hotel workers, continuing education for academic and general interest purposes, training packages for the public and the private sector, and outreach programmes for the educationally deprived.

7 The creation of these colleges is a phenomenon of recent years. For example:

Barbados Community College	1968
College of The Bahamas	1974
Antigua State College	1977
The Gambia College	1979
Clifton Dupigny Community College (Dominica)	1982
Seychelles Polytechnic	1983
Solomon Islands College of Higher Education	1985
Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, St Lucia	1986
St Kitts & Nevis College of Further Education	1988
Tonga Community Development and Training Centre	1988
Grenada National College	1988

8 They reflect, in the main, the coming together of a number of existing institutions. Thus, in the case of St Lucia, an amalgamation of the St Lucia Teachers' College, the Morne Fortune Technical College and the St Lucia 'A' Level College took place. In the Solomon Islands it was the Honiara Technical Institute, the Solomon Islands Teachers' College, the School of Nursing and the Marine Training School. The College of The Bahamas brought together four institutions: The Bahamas Teachers' College, the San Salvador Teachers' College, the CR Walker Technical College and the sixth form programme of the Government High School.

9 Whilst this is the norm, there are exceptions. The Barbados Community College started as a new institution.

10 As a consequence of the process of amalgamation many colleges are split-site institutions. Seychelles Polytechnic has three campuses. The Gambia College has a distance of approximately 30 miles between its main schools. Only rarely, as in the case of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in St Lucia, are all the institutions on one site.

REASONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MULTI-PURPOSE POST-SECONDARY, COLLEGES

11 The major impetus for the expansion of education, especially at the post-school level, came with political independence. Underlying the recent creation of multi-purpose colleges is a determination to increase national autonomy in education and training. It is connected with questions of nationalism, identity and prestige. It is part of a concern to increase access and opportunities to education and training after school, within the country, in a manner which more readily matches the specific needs of the nation.

12 Whilst these may be the underlying factors at work, the meeting in St Lucia recognised a range of more specific factors - educational, economic, social and cultural which help to explain the creation and development of national colleges. These are grouped under five main heads:

a) Human resource development

b) Cost-effective use of scarce education and training resources

c) External example, pressure and influence

d) Evolution of the national education system

e) Strengthening national identity.

Human Resource Development

13 The key resource for any small state is its people. In most cases the availability of natural resources is limited. The economy is open and susceptible to the fluctuations of the international market-place over which small states have little or no control. The commercial or modern sector economy is export-oriented in a narrow range of activities. Linkages with the internal and largely rural economy are ill-developed.

14 Thus there is a wide range of human resource development needs. The modern sector, public and private, requires a range of skills and expertise in order to assist diversification of the economy, strengthening those activities in which the country has developed a comparative advantage and in raising the level of managerial and technical proficiency. Equally important are the educational needs of the majority of the national community, many of whom have benefited little from formal schooling and who live in relative material poverty. The

single, national, multi-purpose college is conceived as an important focus for responding to this diversity of needs - to increase access, to diversify the range of educational options and to meet the critical manpower needs of the nation.

15 The meeting in St Lucia recognised the difficulty of matching this wide range of expectations. The small state has the particular problem of balancing individual demand for a wider range of academic opportunities, at home and abroad, with the pressing and urgent need for skills in critical areas of the economy, as well as raising the general level of education in the country at large. Private demand may be at odds with social demand.

16 Nevertheless the post-secondary college is intended to be responsive to this diversity of human resource development needs; to be more flexible and adaptable than the smaller, specialised training institutions which were its predecessors; to be more than the sum of its original parts. The experience of colleges which have been in existence for a few years suggests some movement in this direction with the growth of new programmes and courses and the widening of the clientele, although, with a few exceptions, not yet playing a major outreach role for the wider and more deprived parts of the nation.

17 It is seen too as a way of formalising and monitoring education and training provision. With a single institution governments may be better able to assess education and training capacity relative to the urgent and changing human resource development needs of the nation. It is a way of setting standards for the nation within one college.

Cost-effective Use of Scarce Resources

18 Most small states have a very limited range of education and training resources on which to draw. There are

shortages of well-training staff, and of equipment, facilities and funds. Given this situation the small country needs to maximise the use of all the resources at its disposal. The post-secondary college offers some advantages in this respect although in the initial phases of its development it may well incur new and additional costs.

19 The attractions of the multi-purpose college are that it may be able to develop a wider range of programme and course options than smaller specialist colleges. For example, as compared with the upper forms of a secondary school the post-secondary college may have the capacity to introduce an improved range of subjects at 'A' level or its equivalent. It may be able to mount short courses to meet local, small scale demand and programmes to meet the requirements of special interest groups.

20 This will not occur through the act of creating a multi-purpose college. It will depend on the efficient utilisation of staff, equipment, buildings and funds. However, the post-secondary college does have the potential to undertake these wider roles compared with single function training institutions.

21 The bringing together of scarce but skilled staff into one college should help to raise the quality of the work of the college. Staff may be used across divisions and sections which would have been difficult or impossible in single function institutions.

22 The post-secondary college may have the capacity to develop common-core programmes as well as common modules which can be used with different courses.

23 The rationalisation of buildings and equipment may make it easier to introduce new equipment and modern technology which, for reasons of cost, the small training institution

may be unable to acquire. The sharing of common services on a single site, college campus may also offer some savings.

24 If the development of the post-secondary college means a reduction in the number of students who would otherwise have gone abroad, this can represent savings on foreign exchange.

25 It is the experience of some countries that the post-secondary college is likely to attract more foreign assistance than other sectors of the education system.

External Example, Pressure and Influence

26 There are a range of push/pull factors, externally inspired, which have affected the development of post-secondary colleges. For example, the post-secondary college may be better able to articulate relationships and linkages with overseas institutions than is the case with smaller, single function colleges. Its existence may help to facilitate certification, accreditation and validation procedures and agreements with other countries and their institutions.

27 Some countries have been inspired to follow the example of amalgamation in other countries in their region. There is an element of the knock on effect.

28 In the Caribbean, the restructuring of the University of the West Indies in 1984 was a major push factor especially in the Eastern Caribbean, where countries are increasing their own national post-secondary capacity through the strengthening or creation of post-secondary colleges. This is a move to increase national autonomy in response to regional uncertainty.

29 Donor agencies have been supportive of post-secondary college development through the provision of capital funding, advisers and staff.

Evolution of the National Education System

30 In a sense there is an inevitability about the development of the post-secondary college as small states seek to expand and strengthen their education systems. Thus, in the Seychelles the establishment of Seychelles Polytechnic was seen as the third and final stage in the overall reform of the education system of the country. It was preceded by reform of the primary system and the establishment of the National Youth Service.

National Identity

31 There is a strong concern in many small states to increase the level of commitment amongst their citizens to national human resource development.

32 The post-secondary college can assist in this process in a number of ways. It can retain some of its most promising students for longer periods than hitherto and thereby enhance the chance that they will understand the contribution they can play in their nation's development.

33 The post-secondary college can mount common core programmes, drawing on a range of staff, which educate students as to their history, their culture, and their national development challenges.

Philosophy, Mission and Purpose

34 It was freely recognised at the St Lucia meeting that whilst it is possible to arrive at a detailed rationale for the establishment of post-secondary colleges many of these factors are perceived more clearly with hindsight than they

were understood at the time of the creation of a post-secondary college.

35 Despite this admission it is clear that the post-secondary college must have a clear sense of purpose and mission. Whether its role is defined in relatively narrow manpower development terms or whether it is seen as an educational resource for all of the nation's citizens, it is imperative that its underlying philosophy is clearly stated and widely understood.

PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POST-SECONDARY COLLEGE

36 The St Lucia meeting noted that the gestation period for the establishment of the post-secondary college was invariably a long one. This contrasts with what is often a relatively short active planning period.

37 It is during this latter time that a range of very specific difficulties surface. These may be grouped as follows:

a) **Physical facilities**; if the post-secondary college results from an amalgamation of existing institutions, problems will arise if they are some distance from one another; if there are disparities in the state and range of their facilities; and if their location relative to population distribution is not conducive to increasing the level of public access

b) **Funding**; costs are incurred in the process of establishing the new college. For some countries the active planning period will not commence without assurances, invariably from external donors, that extra funds will be made available for the purpose

c) **Staffing**; there may be considerable stress involved for those moving from a relatively small specialised training institution to become staff in a larger multi-purpose college. The attitudes and perceptions of staff to the process of change may, initially, inhibit the speed of change. Institution directors or principals may become school or division heads. The terms and conditions of service may change. New roles and responsibilities will be established. (see section on staff development - paragraphs 90-98)

d) **Public perceptions**; students, their parents and the wider community may have strong allegiances to individual institutions, and a belief in their relative importance, one to the other, in terms of status and prestige. They will have concerns about possible loss of identity.

Key Strategies

38 There was agreement at the St Lucia meeting that there are a number of strategies which small states have found to be necessary and helpful in overcoming some of the difficulties referred to in paragraph 37.

39 Careful planning is vital. St Lucia itself provides the example of the importance of establishing a task force, composed of a range of national interests, and charged with the need to consult widely and publicly. This last point is essential if public confidence is to be gained.

40 The task force or planning team will be concerned to draft legislation which will enable the new college to respond in clearly defined yet flexible ways to the mission with which it is charged. Lines of authority and responsibility must be established between the government and its ministries, boards of governors or college councils, and the executive,

staff and students of the college. Clear organisational and management structures must be created and capable of removing or ameliorating the problems referred to in paragraph 37.

41 The leadership of the post-secondary college needs to be open, sensitive and with a clear sense of direction. The political skills of leadership must be allied to an ability to work with a diversity of professional skills, traditions and backgrounds in a participatory and consultative way, without lessening the decision-making role of the principal. The appointment of the principal or director and the senior staff of the college requires the most careful consideration by the college board.

42 Developing the commitment of all staff requires effective communication about the changes which are to take place. Specific mechanisms should be established in the college to handle staff concerns, e.g., through staff associations or regular staff meetings, seminars and induction programmes. Conscious efforts have to be made to ensure that the strengths of pre-amalgamation institutions are not lost. Opportunities should be provided to bring staff from the constituent institutions together during the planning period. Careful attention should be given to the terms under which staff are to be employed in the new institution. Different pay scales will need to be unified and close attention given to the titles of posts and their implications in terms of prestige and status. Professional development programmes will need to be established.

43 Students should be involved in the consultative process and opinions sought on ways by which the concept of a single student body may be achieved. Unifying symbols and activities can be developed.

44 These important lines of communication will be facilitated if there are reliable physical means of contact.

Investment may be necessary in transport and communications including new information technology. This will be especially important for split-site campuses.

THE ORGANISATION, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE OF POST-SECONDARY COLLEGES

45 Despite differences in organisational structures, management styles and levels of resource availability, it was possible for the St Lucia meeting to identify a series of principles and strategies which may be of assistance in the running and financing of the post-secondary college.

46 Of crucial significance is a legislative Act which establishes clearly the powers, duties and roles, at all levels, of those involved in the governance and management of the college.

47 The Act should be framed in such a way that it is not restrictive of change and development; it should be enabling and flexible.

48 The college should be given a form of autonomy which will allow it to evaluate its functions and develop new forms of activity. Nevertheless it will also have to reflect the fact that the government provides the main part of the budget, that there are labour acts which govern terms and conditions in the public service and that ultimate responsibility for the college usually lies with the Ministry of Education. In this respect the powers of the Minister should be clearly defined.

49 A comparison of legislation may be of some benefit to countries yet to enter the active planning phase of college development.

50 **Legislation should provide for a variety of national interests to be represented in governing and advisory bodies.** Concern was expressed that in many instances this representation of interest is entirely within government hands and that there is insufficient involvement of a wider community even where this is provided for in the legislation. In some cases colleges see it as their function to go out and canvas public opinion. Alternatively programme evaluation may be a solution, by gauging the impact of college work on different client groups.

51 There was concern too that the college should be able to be innovative without following time-consuming lines of bureaucratic negotiation and approval. Advisory committees on specific professional concerns may be one way of gaining rapid approval for new courses or for the suspension of a course after a demand has been met.

52 The internal organisational structure of the post-secondary college in small states is likely, certainly in its initial stages, to reflect structures which pre-date the establishment of the college. Close attention should be given to determine what is good, and should be kept, and what, by virtue of the objectives of the new college, requires re-definition. Special attention will need to be given to the administration of the college and to the provision of its common services.

53 Split-site campuses pose particular problems. It is important that each campus should be seen to be treated equally and regularly involved in consultative and management procedures. This requires careful organisation, planning and scheduling. Student linkages should be developed across different parts of the college.

54 The management of students and staff will require processes and procedures for regular consultation and, in the case of staff, professional and managerial development

programmes. A receptive and committed staff is more likely to result in a student body concerned with the development of a corporate identity.

55 These processes will be further supported if there are mechanisms to allow the effective delegation of responsibility to each functional level within the college.

56 Many small colleges retain expatriate staff with the consequent difficulties which may arise from differentials in salary levels. The management of college advisers and staff from overseas is for the leadership of the college sometimes a sensitive task in the overall framework of staff development.

57 Colleges will benefit from internal mechanisms which constantly review their ability to meet objectives and reflect their sense of mission.

58 The establishment of the new college has funding implications. It may require new and additional expenditure on buildings, equipment, new staff, salary adjustments, new courses, and public relations.

59 For the on-going funding of the post-secondary college government subvention is crucial. In the case of the Solomon Islands, for example, 80 per cent of the recurrent budget of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education is provided by the state. Nevertheless, 20 per cent is obtained from student fees and payments for services to students; rent obtained from the use of college facilities for conferences and other services; user charges for specially mounted courses; and on overseas assistance.

60 Many of the colleges represented at the St Lucia meeting are trying to widen their financial base by means similar to those in the Solomon Islands. Additional possibilities

include income generating activities. Bermuda College has its own hotel. Other colleges have farms. But these initiatives are themselves costly and must be seen essentially as vehicles for education and training rather than major commercial ventures.

61 Services to industry, support from college alumni and assistance and sponsorship from professional bodies offer other avenues for finance. Government taxes or levies in support of institutional development is another possibility.

62 Whatever the sources of finance the post-secondary college will need to adopt careful budgetary procedures. It will need to develop a capacity for financial analysis, which enables it to assess the costs of course delivery and the potential for income generating programmes. The costs of staff and equipment and buildings will need to be monitored; the costs of support services regularly assessed. The demands of a good college library must always be taken into account. This requires, in many cases, an attitudinal change to the accountability of post-secondary institutions.

RANGE AND LEVEL OF COURSES

63 Whereas at the initial stage of development courses may be very largely determined by offerings already in place in pre-amalgamation institutions, the evidence from post-secondary colleges with some years of development behind them shows a growing diversity of subject offerings, at a greater variety of level, than was the case at the time of college establishment.

64 Whilst not typical in the sense that it did not develop from an amalgamation of colleges, Barbados Community College is nevertheless symbolic of the broader education and training role which post-secondary colleges increasingly play. The college has eight divisions

(Commerce, Fine Arts, Health Sciences, Hospitality Studies, Liberal Arts, Science and Technology and a Language Centre). It also has a Department of Computer Studies and a Department of General and Continuing Education. It offers 21 different certificates and awards, including an associate degree programme. Forty-eight of its programmes are full-time, ranging in duration from 48 hours to three years. It offers 49 part-time evening courses from 40 hours to 3 years. There are day release and evening programmes. Its admission levels vary from five CXC passes to courses which do not necessitate any entry requirements. Whilst this picture is by no means typical of all colleges it points to the direction in which many colleges are going.

65 With increasing diversity and the growth of national awards alongside regional and international qualifications so terminology relating to levels of qualifications becomes increasingly complex. **This poses problems for small states. As they seek to increase the range of opportunities nationally and internationally so it is necessary to pay particular attention to the content and duration of courses, not only to match national needs but also to maximise access to overseas institutions which themselves demand different levels of entry qualifications. The development of associate degree programmes with regional and extra-regional institutions is one important component of this complex issue.**

66 At the other end of the scale there are questions as to how far post-secondary colleges are genuinely community oriented to the extent that they are able to offer programmes for the majority of the population who have limited educational qualifications. Most colleges by virtue of their history and their resource base define community more narrowly, offering courses to groups and interested individuals able to come into the college.

There is less experience, although it is more prevalent in the South Pacific, of the college going out into the community. This requires a process of need identification initiated by the college - an active search rather than waiting for an expressed need.

67 A feature of some colleges is the foundation course. The Solomon Islands College of Higher Education offers a course which enables its students to sample a range of the College's programmes before moving on to specialised courses. The majority of college students proceed in this way.

68 Another relatively new feature in some colleges is the introduction of common-core courses some of which focus on national culture, history and development e.g. Bahamian Studies in the College of The Bahamas.

69 As noted earlier in this summary report, small states and their post-secondary colleges face the difficult task of providing courses for small groups of people over a short time period. This requires a flexibility of response and an adaptability of management which inherited formal structures may be ill-equipped to meet.

70 The meeting in St Lucia proposed a number of strategies for responding to the changing, yet in one sense limited, skill development needs of the small state. The college might employ or consult a specialist to assess the viability of courses.

71 The college may need to develop a willingness to move away from traditional course offerings and work with groups 'on the job'. It may have to recruit staff on short-term contracts to run programmes, or design courses. It may be desirable to work in collaboration with other institutions and away from the college.

72 The development of modules for use as and when the occasion demands increases the potential for flexible response. As the next section suggests tapping regional and international networks may be helpful in this respect.

73 College management needs to be flexible in its willingness for courses to be mounted without undue bureaucratic red tape.

74 Funding may be sought, perhaps through sponsorship, to meet the costs of individual courses. Other, more general interest courses, can be self-supporting.

75 Training within the college will need to encourage college staff to be committed to this type of approach, and become more flexible in their work style and attitudes.

76 Advisory committees and evaluation surveys by the college will help to monitor the effectiveness of these short-term programmes in meeting urgent manpower needs, and in helping to raise the general level of education in particular groups in the community.

MODES OF DELIVERY

77 Modes of delivery used by post-secondary colleges will be affected by a variety of factors. The nature of the client group is one consideration. Thus age levels, ability levels, special interests, special needs, access, or lack of, to the college will all affect decisions as to the most appropriate means of delivering courses.

78 The ability of students to attend courses at the college on a full or part-time basis or pursue programmes away from the college on a full or part-time basis will also have a bearing on the mode of delivery.

79 The content of courses will be influential. Competency-based courses as against knowledge-oriented programmes may suggest the use of different types of learning experience.

80 Considerations of the availability of skilled and well-trained staff, appropriate facilities and equipment and a sufficiency of funding will also determine the variety of delivery modes that it is possible to develop.

81 What is of paramount importance is a clear definition of the objectives of each and every course. The mode of delivery should be designed to be the most appropriate way to meet the objectives set by the programme.

82 Whilst the full-time, classroom-based approach remains the norm there is evidence of a greater variety of approach in the post-secondary colleges of Commonwealth small states. The modularisation of courses is one development. This may allow for much greater flexibility in the provision of courses, enabling students to gain credits over a longer period of time than might be the case on a full-time course. Modules may also be used across courses and taken 'off the shelf' to meet special needs as they arise.

83 In some colleges an outreach role has been developed whereby staff deliver programmes in rural training centres or directly with special interest groups at their place of work. An indirect outreach role is to train trainers to work with local community groups. A further variation on this theme is for the college to work closely with other educational and training bodies or non-governmental organisations in the delivery of courses.

84 Distance education also offers opportunities for colleges to increase access to their programmes, to reach larger numbers and in turn create the demand for further education. Whilst correspondence education has a long

history and remains the most widely used form, television, radio, video and satellite offer new mechanisms for learning opportunities.

85 There is considerable experience of distance education in small states in the Caribbean and the South Pacific through the work of regional universities. There is the potential for post-secondary colleges to become more integral parts of these regional networks. In this way the strengths of individual institutions can be tapped. Materials can be exchanged and staff skills utilised for a regional rather than a national market.

86 At the pan-Commonwealth level, the new institution for co-operation in distance learning - the Commonwealth of Learning - offers the prospect that small state institutions might gain access to courses which have already been developed and benefit from the training of their staff in distance education techniques. However, the St Lucia meeting noted that this will only be of benefit to small countries if the new agency has a clear understanding of the needs of small states, post-secondary colleges and does not restrict its role to academic institutions in larger countries.

87 Whilst noting the potential offered by new modes of delivery some words of caution were offered. Increasing the range of delivery methods has a number of implications for the organisation and management of colleges - for timetabling and the allocation of staff duties. There are implications too for assessing standards for courses delivered in different ways. Staff familiar with classroom teaching may be ill-equipped to play an outreach role. Initially, too, they may be unwilling to play new and more varied roles. The introduction of new and high technology is costly, and its maintenance may be problematic.

88 Thus newly established post-secondary colleges have to undertake a careful analysis of their capacity to extend the range of their modes of delivery. Traditional forms of instruction have to be exploited more effectively and made more exciting and relevant. New ways of learning have to be tailored to the specific needs of client groups. Equally important is the training of staff of post-secondary colleges in the methodologies of modes of delivery and especially in how to teach and interact properly in distance education situations. This can be assisted by tapping wider regional and international networks of information and training.

89 In the process of selecting modes of delivery post-secondary colleges must be constantly aware of the need to be flexible, responsive, organised and sensitive to the requirements of its clients.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

90 The St Lucia meeting agreed that it was essential to perceive staff development within the overall framework set by the mission, sense of purpose and objectives of the post-secondary college. The creation of such colleges give staff the opportunity, perhaps for the first time, to see their roles within a broad national, developmental and educational context, the more so if the post-secondary college is conceived as the lynch pin of post-school education and training. The creation of multi-purpose colleges was, and is, in most countries, symbolic of a reorientation of systems and strategies. Staff development is needed to ensure that this change is understood, so that individuals can see that they have a role to play in this change, in ways which may be different from the narrower and more specialist roles that they played in pre-amalgamation institutions. This is not to question their professionalism and expertise but rather to exploit these talents is a new way.

91 A variety of approaches to staff development were explored including the need for activities in support of the corporate development of the institution, the needs of the school or division, and the personal needs of the individual. All three needs require an institutional climate or ethos totally in support of, and conducive to, staff development; a receptivity on the part of staff at all levels, and a disposition on the part of leadership to conceive staff development as integral to institution building.

92 Many of the strategies put forward could equally be applied in institutions in larger countries. The central principles of staff development need not be altered in devising approaches to meet the needs of post-secondary colleges in small states. However, in planning for staff development - and if it is to be successful it must be carefully planned - account has to be taken of some rather special circumstances, notably the strong personal networks which exist in small countries, whereby knowledge about individuals is widely shared. Secondly, and related to the first factor, there is the intensity of life in national colleges, where small issues may take on exaggerated importance in the complex network of personal relationships which exist. It is difficult to be prescriptive about how this context can be planned for, but it should be recognised both in planning and in the implementation of staff development activities.

93 Staff development will be facilitated by a range of good management approaches within the college. A well articulated management structure defining responsibilities at all levels will assist staff in an appreciation of the totality of the institution in which they work. A good management team can provide leadership and the stimulus for staff development. This principle can operate at different levels within the college.

94 Clearly defined job descriptions, carefully planned induction programmes, a systematic approach to performance appraisal, conscious of the investment of time which this requires, involvement in advisory and management committees, the provision of formal management training; these and other measures will all succeed in raising management capability if the recipient perceives these measures as relevant to his or her success in fulfilling key institutional tasks.

95 In the area of the professional development of staff in their specialised concerns and interests, attachments, staff exchange, study leave, short and specific training courses, the training of junior members of staff and peer group training, all offer well-tested approaches to stimulating the professional awareness and commitment of staff.

96 A number of colleges facilitate these procedures by the creation of a staff development officer or a personnel officer or perhaps, most commonly, allocate the responsibility for staff development to a senior member of the college management team. There is perhaps as yet relatively little experience as to the success of these mechanisms. Staff development can be relegated if it is one of many tasks with which the manager has to deal and in small colleges a multi-functional role is not uncommon.

97 However it is planned and organised, staff development does need specific budgetary provision. In some countries this may be predominantly overseas money in support of overseas training opportunities. National financial provision for internal training may be more difficult to procure.

98 Sources of training other than in the formal education sector can be used. Management institutes and industrial training courses can also be utilised.

LINKAGES

99 By virtue of their size, small states have traditionally been dependent on external linkages for many aspects of post-school education. This reflects both the inherited educational structure of pre-independence times and the recognition that a small state cannot easily provide a full range of post-secondary opportunities characteristic of larger countries.

100 In recent years there has been increasing diversification of these educational linkages. The meeting in St Lucia explored this trend under three main heads:

a) Internal linkages
b) Regional linkages
c) Extra-regional linkages

Internal Linkages

101 If the post-secondary college is perceived as serving a wide clientele with a broad human resource remit so it is important that links, formal and informal, are established with a full range of interest groups. Thus Seychelles Polytechnic identifies eight key linkages - with the Ministry of Education; with other government Ministries and especially those concerned with economic planning; with the private sector, especially employers; with professional bodies; with the representatives of local government serving the islands; with parents; with foreign high commissions and embassies in Seychelles; and with organs of public information.

102 These, and other forms of linkage, are important components of national educational development, assisting institutional development, whilst widening public perceptions of the educational opportunities which exist within the country.

Regional Linkages

103 Regional linkages are of special relevance to the South Pacific and the Caribbean. Regional universities, and regional conferences and professional associations play an important part in the totality of post-secondary educational offerings in small states.

104 The meeting in St Lucia recognised the special but changing relationship between the regional university and national educational institutions, especially post-secondary colleges. This was exemplified by the case of the University of the West Indies.

105 The University has, as part of its guidelines, the injunction that it should play a positive role in the development and improvement of other tertiary institutions in the region and should be regarded as part of the entire system of tertiary education. In recent years this has led to the establishment of Offices of University Services for the Eastern and Western Caribbean to improve the access of non-campus countries to tertiary education and to assist in the development of national tertiary level systems.

106 These relationships have been articulated in a number of ways with respect to post-secondary colleges. The University may award its own qualifications in respect of programmes followed in other institutions, e.g., the Bachelor of Education degree obtainable at The College of The Bahamas. The programme need not be identical to that offered by the University.

107 The University moderates national teachers' colleges examinations, endorsing certificates which are in turn a basis for university entry. Joint programmes with national institutions can be developed. Recognition can be given to courses taught in national colleges including first year

degree programmes. There is growth too in University accreditation of programmes followed in post-secondary colleges. There are examples of exemptions being granted from part one degree programmes based on courses taken in national colleges.

108 Within this type of framework, which is not easy to articulate and develop, these are clear opportunities for post-secondary colleges in small states to benefit from the expertise and skills of the regional university in ways which are supportive of extending national education and training capacity.

109 A slightly different form of regional relationship is exemplified by the work of the College of Arts, Science and Technology (CAST) in Jamaica. Here, a national institution, in the largest country in the region reserves training places for Eastern Caribbean students.

110 There are a variety of other ways in which post-secondary colleges can benefit from regional contacts and relationships. Examples include professional associations such as the Caribbean Association for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (CATVET), linkages through UNESCO networks and offices (CARNEID and SOPAC) and through bodies such as the Caribbean Examinations Council and the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment.

Extra-Regional Linkages

111 At this level too the trend is towards maximum flexibility; increasing the range of options for access to post-secondary education. This is particularly crucial for countries such as Bermuda, Seychelles and Maldives which are not part of strong regional groupings and networks.

112 Whilst Bermuda is not typical of small states in the Commonwealth economically, it exemplifies many of the other

aspects of smallness of scale which impact on national educational development. Historically and politically linked with Britain, Bermuda has re-assessed its educational needs and responses in order to match them more nearly to the economic needs of the nation whilst widening access to post-secondary institution in the United States and Canada as well as Britain. It has redesigned its own college programmes and assiduously sought recognition of these courses as a basis for entry into a range of overseas colleges.

113 A different form of linkage is highlighted by the close ties which have been established between the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in Saint Lucia and St Lawrence College in Canada. The intention of this association is institution building at both ends of the link. For Saint Lucia it means exchange visits by students and staff, assistance in the development and teaching of new courses and the training of college staff. It is a link which is funded by CIDA.

114 The watchword for post-secondary colleges and the countries they serve is flexibility; flexibility in seeking sources of assistance in institution building and flexibility in accessing a wide range of opportunities regionally, and further afield, both to increase opportunity and to tap sources of skill and expertise which it is not possible to develop locally.

AID AND CO-OPERATION

115 Aid and co-operation is a part of regional and international linkage. Just as small states are extending the range of their professional and institutional linkages so it is the case that sources of aid - bilateral, multi-lateral, governmental and non-governmental - have increased in number and extended the scope of their operations. Thus it has been the experience of many small

countries that access is not the issue; **the key concern is to ensure that the assistance is relevant and, as far as is possible, under the control of the receiving country or institution in a way that meshes with the objectives and aspirations of the post-secondary college.**

116 Each college may find itself dealing directly or indirectly with a number of aid agencies and overseas institutions. One college was able to identify at least 11 major agencies which in recent years have been involved in its institutional development. The management of this process and the pressure on staff to deal with overseas aid teams is a major problem.

117 The mechanisms under which aid is provided are varied. For example, the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in St Lucia has experience of benefiting from:

a) Awards, scholarships and grants to students from other East Caribbean islands to attend regional courses based in the College

b) Technical assistance in the way of advisers, staff and co-operation

c) Fellowships and scholarships for the upgrading of staff

d) Capital assistance for equipment and building

e) Funding for attachments

f) Obtaining components of multi-lateral project developments.

118 Whilst this aid is welcome and in the main of direct benefit, a number of difficulties were cited at the

St Lucia meeting. First there is the question of obtaining maximum benefit from advisers. Effective orientation is an important requisite for any adviser. Clear terms of reference should be established and the conditions of service unambiguously laid down. It is often the case that the time frame within which advisers' work is inadequate to come to grips with the socio-political context as well as the technical issues. Host governments or institutions may have an agenda for advisers which is not explicitly stated. Perhaps the advisers may have ways of working and professional standpoints which ill-fit the circumstances of the country in question. Mutual comprehension and understanding has to be worked at.

119 The problems of obtaining and working with counterparts is another difficult issue. First there is the problem of the local counterpart being able to escape a range of tasks and duties to focus on his or her counterpart role. Secondly, if attachments or awards overseas are a component of staff training it is often extremely difficult to obtain staff cover for the absent trainee. This issue needs to be addressed in any training package.

120 Another issue arises in relation to the identification, development, management and evaluation of projects. There may be a temptation for this to be firmly in the hands of the executing agency which in some instances has complicated and demanding procedures to follow. It may be extremely difficult for a ministry or a college to have or develop the capacity locally to control project development in the interest of the institution. Again there is no easy answer beyond a determination and an investment in time in the preparatory and design stage of the project to ensure a strong national role. However, this too requires negotiating skills and a clear understanding of the way in which different agencies function.

121 Pointers to new forms of aid and co-operation were cited. Barbados, Solomon Islands and St Lucia can all point to their own post-secondary colleges training students from neighbouring countries with financial backing from funding agencies - third country training. As post-secondary colleges grow so this role will develop with all the benefits which accrue for institutional development and mutual understanding.

122 Regional networks of the type exemplified by CARNEID offer other fruitful models for co-operation and development. Many of CARNEID's network of associate centres are post-secondary colleges which in turn can benefit from the training, information and catalytic role which the regional network can play.

123 Aid is a fact of life for small states. The art is to understand where it is available and in what form; how it can be accessed; and how it can be managed and evaluated in ways that do not stray from the central objectives of institutional development.

PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE CO-OPERATION

The meeting in St Lucia noted and supported the following proposals for follow-up action:

1 The summary report of the meeting should be circulated immediately. It should go to ministries of education in small states, to multi-purpose colleges and to specialist training institutions and to regional and international agencies serving the small states of the Commonwealth.

2 On request the summary report should be made available to colleges for staff development purposes and to ministries for national policy seminars.

3 A practical handbook on the establishment and development of multi-purpose colleges should be prepared. It should be based on the findings of the meeting and include short case studies drawn from the countries participating in St Lucia.

4 Participants to the St Lucia meeting should identify specific forms of linkage in support of institutional development which they and their national colleges wish to pursue with other small state institutions. Where appropriate, requests for support for attachments, exchange visits or short training courses should be submitted to the Commonwealth Secretariat for its support, either directly, or indirectly through its brokerage role.

5 The Commonwealth Secretariat should continue to keep national post-secondary colleges informed of developments in other small states. The directory of national post-secondary education and training institutions in small states to be prepared by the Secretariat in 1988/89, should be circulated widely.

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